

(20)
A N

E P I S T L E

Address'd to a

F R I E N D.

*Tityrus hinc aberat. Ipsæ te, Tityre, pinus,
Ipsi te fontes, ipsa hæc arbuta vocabant.*

V I R G.

LIST

THE

CO.

THE

A N
E P I S T L E
T O A
F R I E N D.

S HALL the gay beauties of this charming
 feat
Unheeded fall, and not a Muse solace
Declining Nature, now in these last days
Of lovely Autumn hasting to decay ?

— THY genius, C——R, still inspires, tho' all
 The muses droop, and still thy friendship blooms
 Fairer than spring, while every charm the year
 Op'ning diffus'd o'er these delighted plains
 Appears no more.— To thee in this decline
 Still can I sing, while thy pure friendship lends
 Its tuneful aid.— No more the woods rejoice;
 The fields are desert, and no chearful note
 Of melody now warbles: all day long
 On rain and storm the rook hoarse croaking calls;
 All else are silent, till the close of eve,
 When the fore harass'd partridge gives a loose
 To grief, beneath the friendly shade of night.
 Then, from the murd'rous fowler's bloody aim
 Escap'd, her scatter'd family she mourns,
 And through the night oft to convene them calls,
 Oft fears their death, oft mourns her faithful mate,
 Ne'er from her side in times of wo before,
 And oft the sportsman's treachery reproves.

THEE too, poor redbreast, at the hours of eve
 And morn I hear, while on the neighb'ring bough
 Thy sweetest notes, by sadness tun'd, lament
 The gentle seasons past, and in a few,
 But moving strains of melody, request
 Of man a shelter from fell winter's rage.

THE Muse thy sorrow shares, and Autumn's fall
 Wakes her sad strain.— Might but her vary'd verse,
 Sweet warbling as thy note, lament the fate
 Of beauty, song, and joy; how sadly chang'd
 To universal silence, wo and wild!

No more the happy songsters now delight
 The tuneful groves; joy now no more awakes
 Their sweeter notes; nor is one bosom warm'd
 With melody, or love, or sportive air,
 Powerful to charm. These were the soft effects
 Of happier days, when milder sun and air

Sweet-

Sweetness inspir'd, and tendernefs, and joy
 In every breast. But now the fading trees,
 Departing autumn, and approaching storms
 Fill the sad feather'd tribes with other cares ;
 To save their little lives, by famine, cold,
 And many a hard distress pursu'd. The woods,
 Half-bare and wither'd, change their healthful look
 Of chearful green, for many a sickly hue
 Of orange, brown, and yellow, deadly pale ;
 Yet, pleasing to the eye, they smile in death,
 While they await the gentlest blowing gale,
 To shake their lovely foliage to the ground.—

How the plains mourn ! and all the garden's
 pride

How low, or vanish'd ! — Now let us attend,
 While all around us suffer those decays
 We soon must feel : may we our passions tune
 To serious wisdom, and, amid the sad
 Decline of nature, still exalt the mind

To higher order, harmony, and bloom ;
 Be to the latest breath serene, and taste
 Still finer joys thro' life ; yet be well pleas'd
 With Nature's order, when we too must soon
 Fade as the leaf, like it forgotten lie,
 While other generations rise to life,
 And joy, and song, through other circling years.
 Returning Spring will quicken many a life,
 And with reviving beauty, song and joy,
 Fill the glad year ; and man with endless spring
 Is visited, when his great year arrives,
 That wakes him from his bed to other life
 Than animates this mortal dust ; — to scenes
 Of bliss and beauty, such as, were they now
 Display'd, wou'd suddenly his frame dissolve.
 Then universal beauty beaming full
 On the pure mind, will other raptures wake
 Than Poet ever felt, and melody,
 To which compar'd all harmony below
 Is but the stamm'ring talk of childish lip.

BUT these are subjects which the grov'ling muse
 May not attempt ; let it suffice her here,
 Bury'd in earth, to sing the present state,
 To join in Nature's symphony below,
 Study her order, listen to her song
 Of ever-rising harmony, and tune
 The passions to those various strains, so oft
 Hard for gross ears of flesh to comprehend,
 Till long attention shall at length prepare
 The mind to relish harmony above,
 And universal order fully seen.

MEAN while the various beauties of the year
 Daily decline, and every grace forfakes
 The dismal plains. From out the naked woods
 The chaste shade-loving Muse is forc'd to fly,
 And Meditation finds her secret walk
 Discover'd in the darken'd grove, beside
 The brook soft-warbling. Whither now, amid

This general desolation, shall my Muse,
 Driv'n from her fav'rite company and haunts,
 Make her retreat, while tempests still increase,
 And from the groves shut out the race of men?

MAY ne'er the guilty rambles of a town,
 The midnight dance, or long-continu'd game,
 The flust'ring cup, debate, or frolick mad,
 Succeed to these calm evening-hours, so blest'd
 With peace, philosophy, and sober muse.

YE gentle powers! oh come! and, till the spring
 Again invite us to her charming walks,
 Rejoice my hours; while by the chearful fire
 We hold our happy interviews, before
 The noisy day awakes, or late at night
 When from the roving scenes of life retir'd;
 While o'er the fields of heaven the radiant hosts
 Sparkling rejoice, and wake our solemn song,
 To touch on glories, by seraphic lyre

Thro' the still midnight air harmonious hymn'd.

OR thee, O C——R, might my door expect!
 Thee every Muse adorns, and every grace
 Finds in thy bosom a perpetual spring,
 With sun-shine and serenity still bless'd.
 There spotless Honour ever blooms, and Truth
 Unclouded shines; Compassion ever melts
 At every wo, and ready Goodness shews
 Its friendly succour; while, amid the pangs
 Of private pain, stands Fortitude unmov'd,
 And Resignation ever smiles; as late
 The mirror of affliction fully shew'd.

How oft amid these solitary shades,
 Thy late lov'd haunts, meet I thy genius, still
 Propitious, while my roving thought it checks,
 Prompts to high honour, goodness, and true joys;
 Awakes the tender, or the solemn strain,
 And easy song inspires, save when I dare

Fondly

Fondly attempt a theme touch'd by thy lyre,
 With sweetest notes of melody well known,
 O ARNISTON! to all thy groves, that oft
 Shar'd with the list'ning woods his tuneful strains.

THY strains the groves retain, nor other lyre
 Less musical will hear; else had I sung
 To them a rapture by themselves inspir'd.

YE too, ye powers of beauty and true taste,
 That grace the dome, and thro' the verdant plains
 Majestic smile, and 'mid the cover'd shades
 Seem loveliest in your still retreats, my lyre
 Ye too had tun'd; nor shou'd I left unsung
 Thy situation, lovely seat! if verse
 As simple and majestic had not fail'd.

THY various prospects should have next enrich'd
 My vary'd verse.—First, to the North the plain
 Stretch'd out and peopled, villages and towns,

With rural seats, refreshing woods and streams,
The sea beyond, and hills to shut the scene.

THEN next I Westward should have turn'd, and
sung

The slopping woods; the craggy steeps o'ergrown,
High hanging o'er the streams that roar below,
As o'er their rocky channels they make way;
The woody copse beyond, and fertile plains
With hills, and rural seats: how charming all!
To him who tuneful from the *Woodhead Walk*
Beholds in summer, as from out the shades
He comes, bright day, and wide extended scenes
Of rural beauty fill his ravish'd eye;
Till soon again to solemn shade he comes,
Where splendor all is veil'd, and the glad eye
Feasts on its fav'rite colour 'mid the woods.

LED by the sound of falling water, next
Southward I'd gone, and thro' my sounding verse

Made the cascade's sonorous noise be heard,
 And wav'd the surface of the silent ponds.
 Nor should the little rivulet, that yields
 Such show, remain'd unfung; nor its retreat
 Miss'd my attendant verse, as from its pomp,
 Down o'er the steep it hastens to the grove;
 Where, ere it mixes with the Western stream,
 Peaceful it glides amid the silent shades,
 In secret warbling.— Like the truly good
 Withdrawn from splendor in their evening-life,
 And happier in retirement than in courts.

How had the vista's of the new *High Walk*
 My song renew'd! How should I thence have sung
 The country round! and chief admir'd thy seat,
 O ARNISTON! seen lovely 'mid its woods,
 From the detasteful neighbourhood of towns
 And villages most happily remov'd;
 Free, grand, and open, as befits thy soul,
 As plann'd thy genius, as thy taste improves.

THENCE

THENCE too the Eastern prospect had I sung,
 The rising orchard, and the cultur'd plains,
 The grassy meadow, and the corny hill,
 The rural feat amid the woods, where flows
 The rivulet, high o'er whose craggy bank,
 Thou stood'st, O Arbor ! once, who sav'd'st a life
 Dear to thy country still, yet did some rash
 Unknowing hand thee fell.— When 'long the steep
 The narrow path-way cou'd be seen no more,
 The rider and his horse were thrown on thee,
 Thou held the rider, while in air the steed
 Hung by the reins, till by his master's hand
 They're cut ; then falling down, he rose unmaim'd,
 And bore his much astonish'd master home.

WHAT various scenes besides, which now the
 muse
 Cannot rehearse, had her delighted lyre
 Unweary'd sung down in the woody vales,

Along

Along the streams, and rills, and shining glades;
 Or from the woody promontories high,
 Where deep below the winding torrents roar,
 Rais'd her high song to all the list'ning groves!

BUT now the raptur'd muse in silence sees
 Whate'er might swell the sweetly vary'd song
 Of melody, while in her ravish'd ear
 Those sweetest strains of harmony resound,
 Which late amid these shades thy tuneful lyre,
 O C——R, pour'd, and once sung to the muse,
 Who oft has since requested them in vain,
 And her's, inferior far, to gain them gave.
 Thus yielded song, and Friendship's sweeter voice,
 Join'd in her suit; yet were of thee unheard.

BUT stop, my Muse, nor heavier charge a friend,
 Too fond of thee, to his own worth deny'd,
 Just in all else; whose friendship lovely shines
 O'er thy still days, from the far distant North,

And

And thro' the dark'ning clouds of deep distress
 Breaks from a heart whence piety's pure rays,
 And virtue's gentle sunshine ever dart
 Superior light, and animating joys.

THROUGH the lone quiet of a life cut off
 From the glad sight of friends, the Muse expects
 Thy friendship's chearful beam, to light her gloom:
 Tho' from a-far, yet powerful will it charm
 With every virtuous, every pious joy.

THY friendship's sacred influence will she sing,
 Thro' winter-glooms; nor to this private song
 Confin'd, she to thy just discerning ear
 Will tune her lyre, to sing whatever worth
 And unpolluted honesty she finds,
 In these sad days, when inward honour fades,
 While shameless villany its air assumes,
 And foul pollution, raging, makes the good
 With just and gen'rous indignation shun

The politics and parties of these times.

THE pure retirements of the truly good
 Oft let us haunt, and thro' their blameless groves
 Study true worth : while honour, virtue, truth,
 The love of country and of freedom bloom,
 With most unfully'd beauty, 'mid the shades.
 Here, where all foreign honours fall, the rays
 Of inward worth and honour, freedom, truth,
 And independence, stream more glorious light
 Than ever shone from stars conferr'd by Kings,
 Or from Imperial diadems ; nor beam
 These rays promiscuous round a vulgar herd,
 But to the good belong in spite of courts ;
 Who find it vain to cover with disgrace
 True genuine worth, made glorious by retreat,
 And with unfailing honours crown'd, when death
 Transmits to endless liberty and life.

THUS sings the Muse in this inspiring feat,

Where oft she studies, oft she feels the charm
 Of public virtue shining in a life
 On gen'rous deeds intent, from gen'rous views,
 Such as command th'esteem which others court.

WHILE sacred honour, independence, truth,
 All mean submissions scorn'd, all honours high
 By faithless courts conferr'd on shameful terms,
 Soon he this prize of deathless glory gain'd,
 " True to his country while he serv'd the crown."

NOR less in this retreat his worth appears,
 While genuine goodness from the gen'rous heart
 Shines in the social offices of life ;
 Or for his country beams the patriot ray.

LONG shine his great retreat ; and, here re-
 mov'd
 From fraud, and flattery, and party-rage,
 Still let me study to be truly great,

In freedom, friendship, independence, truth,
 Whose praise in ARNISTON the Muse wou'd sing,
 But fears to lessen what she cannot raise;
 Content that hence she borrows patriot fire,
 Which to thy friendship, C——R, still she owes.

Arniston, October 23.

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